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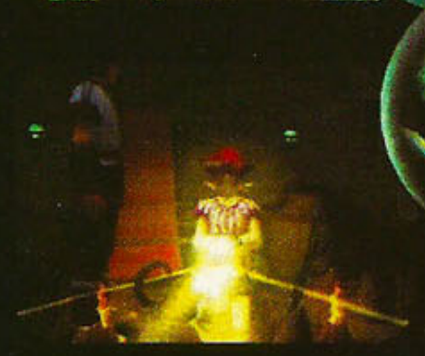
EXCLUSIVE PLAYSTATION 2 INFORMATION INSIDE!



JADE COCOON™

STORY OF THE TAMAMAYU









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TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

PlayStation

CRAVE ENTERTAINMENT

Genki

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EARTHWORM JIM 3D



FIGHTING TO SAVE THE ~~WORLD~~, THE ~~UNIVERSE~~, HIS OWN MIND!

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ACCESSING

EXCLUSIVE PLAYSTATION 2 INFORMATION

We were originally set to run a follow up story to last issue's console diversification article, but some big PSX2 news hit at the last minute. Silicon Magazine has been given confirmation from two reliable sources of the Playstation 2's launch date, price and a few game titles. In issue 12's Buzz section, we reported that the brokerage firm Dean Whitter had quoted Sony as planning a holiday launch of PSX 2 in Japan. A second set of reports from Meryll Lynch confirms what we had originally reported.

The PSX2 will launch January 23, 2000. It is expected that less than half a million units will be available when it hits (400,000 is the number we keep hearing). Despite an ongoing recession, demand for the system is projected to heavily outweigh supply and Sony will ship a minimum of 1 million units by April 1, 2000 and that's no joke. Insiders also report the physical design is finished and totally different from the current system.

PSX2 will debut at $391 (Y45,000). Considering that the original PSX launched at $299 and in it's day was only half the technological marvel of its successor, the price isn't so bad. Of course, the PSX is now selling for $129 and is going to drop to $99 or so in the near future. By the time PSX 2 hits the U.S. next year, SM expects it to be priced at $249 or maybe even the magic $199 point.

PSX2 is still the interim name being used, and there is no official word confirming what the system will be called. PSX 2000 is unlikely because of the average 5 year life cycle of a game system. A system labeled PSX 2000, in 2005 would sound out of date. Dropping the PSX name is also not an option like, Walkman, Playstation is part of our everyday language. At this September's Tokyo Game Show, Sony will make such details publicly known and show the system.

There are expected to be at least ten games at launch, many of them will be top Sony titles. SM played a demonstration version Gran Turismo a few months back and it would go to logic that it is one of the launch titles. The Sony made games will be comprised of enhanced versions of established franchises and two or three brand new games. Namco has supported Sony at launch in the past with Tekken and Ridge Racer games and will do so this time around. Koei has two titles in the works. Another Electronic Gaming magazine that's also Monthly incorrectly reported that one of the games (Kessen) is the first officially announced PSX 2 game. Not so. Art Dink's train simulation Take The A-Train VI takes the titles of ishi-ban.

Sony looks set to keep their dominant position, but it may be harder than it looks. No one knows whether the PSX2 will play DVD movies. Selling a $400 system that only plays games is going to be a tough sale and further helps Sega in their argument that DC is up to any challenge Sony can offer. Currently, PSX2 will not ship with a modem, although it will be an option.

Sega argues that Sony is merely trying to draw people's attention away from Dreamcast. When all is said and done, the current DC pricing is still half of the PSX2, the software library is well rounded and, as of 9/9/99, for sale to the public.

If Sony can deliver at least six games, SM thinks PSX2 will be the system to beat, in Japan. In the States, Sony is at least a year away from launch and in that time a lot will happen. Sega will have more games, a large installed base and a lower price point.

BOXES



Our vote for best looking box this issue is Crave Entertainment's Jade Cocoon. What's even cooler is that the game is also included with the sexy packaging, yeah baby! If you like RPGs that include monster breeding aspects, you can't go wrong.

SILICON MAGAZINE

Issue 13 • 9.99

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DIALOGUE

SEND US A LETTER: DIALOGUE@SILICONMAGAZINE.COM

I've been reading your mag for a few months now and it is the best mag in the world! My favorite section is Dialogue. It's fun to read about your punishing the editors for making mistakes.
James Harrington
Via the Internet

SM- Thanks for the complements! It's not really punishment, we think of it as quality control.

I am considering buying a Sega Dreamcast. Would you recommend I get it or wait for the PSX2? Also, Driver looks tight!
Jeffrey McKeever
Fresno, CA

SM- We'd say get both. Sega's system will be on the shelves by the time you read this. It's got a ton of great games and isn't too expensive. (The Saturn launched at $399!) Also, Sony's system is at least a year away from U.S. launch. It will launch at a similar price point to DC and you could simply save up for it in the mean time. Both systems will have games you will want and are exclusive to each platform, so why torture yourself? BTW, Driver rules.

I just recently discovered your magazine (issue 11) and thoroughly enjoyed it. I have a couple of questions. You reviewed Shanghai: True Valor for the PSX. Is this game available yet? I still have the Shanghai game for my old Saturn that the whole family enjoys, but that game is from Activision, not Sunsoft. Can you provide me with some additional information and possibly a phone number for Sunsoft?
Mike Ford
Via the Internet

SM- Shanghai: True Valor should be in stores by the time you read this, Mike. If you don't see it on the shelves, make sure you ask for it. The Shanghai series has a devoted following and we are glad to be able to let everyone know an updated version is available. S: TV was actually developed by Activision, but is being published by Sunsoft in the US. Sunsoft's number is 714-850-2700, Ext. 35. Tell them SM sent you!

We goofed:
In the last paragraph of the FFVIII preview on page 5 of issue 12, we accidentally, called FFVIII, FFVII. To insure a continued quality reading experience, we locked the editor that made the mistake in the SM dungeon. He was there for 8 days with only 8 packages of Ramen noodles, an 8-bit Nintendo, a copy of 8 Eyes, an 8 inch Black and White TV and the 8-track version of the 8 Is Enough theme song for company. Tragically, we found he had been ate (pun intended) by a pack of rabid seamonkeys, so we buried him in a shallow (8 inches deep to be exact), unmarked grave. Ah, quality control.

GEAR

BY THE SM STAFF

PLAYSTATION & NINTENDO 64
AIR RACER
PER4MER

Per4mer's Air Racer steering wheel is billed as "the most revolutionary game controller in the last 20 years". That's a great premise, but as with all-too-many third-party gaming accessories, it doesn't hold up quite as well when put in the hands of an actual gamer.

One can control a favorite driving or flying game with the Air Racer as would be done with a typical steering wheel. The hook is that this wheel is not confined to a stand or any other such device that forces the player to keep it in a fixed, level position. Using "optical 3-D technology", the Air Racer is held in the air allowing the player a much greater level of flexibility and freedom.

It seems to be designed primarily for the Playstation as the Air Racer's Nintendo 64 compatibility appears to have been tacked on at the last minute. Through an included adapter, the device can be connected to the N64. Regrettably, the instruction manual, although providing thorough documentation on how to modify the Racer for the PSX includes nary a mention of how to set up the device for N64 use.

Regardless of documentation faults, the Air Racer does perform as promised and includes enough customization options (adjustment of steering and tilting sensitivity, button reassignment, etc.) to make it fully useful with the majority of driving and flight simulation games.

Rating (5-95): 80





PLAYSTATION & NINTENDO 64
UNIVERSAL ROCKER
NAKI INTERNATIONAL

Are you one of those players that views the standard Nintendo 64 controller with disgust? Can't imagine using that over-sized preschool pad for serious gaming? Naki has heard your cries and has provided a controller that looks and feels like a Playstation pad that works with both PSX and N64.

The Universal Rocker Controller is slightly larger and heavier than the regular Playstation controller and comes with Autofire and slow-motion features. As a Playstation controller, it excels. Working well with all of our test games, we found no faults with it. Switching to the N64, some game's performance improved dramatically (Mario Party was much easier and the padded Analog sticks allowed for faster and more comfortable "reeling"). Other games, such as Diddy Kong Racing, were virtually unplayable due to the location of the Z button on the Rocker pad (The Z button is set to the R3/L3 buttons, accessed by clicking down on an analog stick).

If you own both a N64 and a PSX, this controller is superb. Just bear in mind that due to the button differences, some N64 games will not work as well with it, and the lack of a 64 memory card port is also a factor.

Rating (5-95): 85

GAME BOY COLOR/POCKET
SNAP 'N' POWER
NUBY

Portable videogame systems. They're cheap, self-contained and easy to use. As anyone familiar with the addictive phenomenon known as Pokemon will attest, portable systems can guzzle batteries in no time. That's where Nuby steps in with their Snap 'N' Power.

This device is a rechargeable battery pack for either the Game Boy Pocket or the Game Boy Color. The device snaps snugly into the back of the system as you play. NUBY claims that the fully charged pack could last up to ten hours, although from SM's rigorous testing we feel safe in saying that 8 to 9 hours is a more realistic number. The battery pack is plugged into an electrical outlet with an included AC adapter. The power cord can also be plugged into the pack while the Game Boy is in use. This eliminates the need for an extra AC adapter for the GB, and is ideal for those who like to play at home. With the battery charge time around 12 hours, you'll spend more time charging the S'N'P than using it.

The Snap 'N' Power is a fairly useful device, though one that we don't recommend everyone run out and buy. If you don't mind spending the extra dollars on batteries, you're better off with them since they offer convenience. If you're hooked on GBC and want to save some money without sacrificing any time catching Pokemon, the Snap 'N' Power will do the job.

Rating (5-95): 75



NOTICED

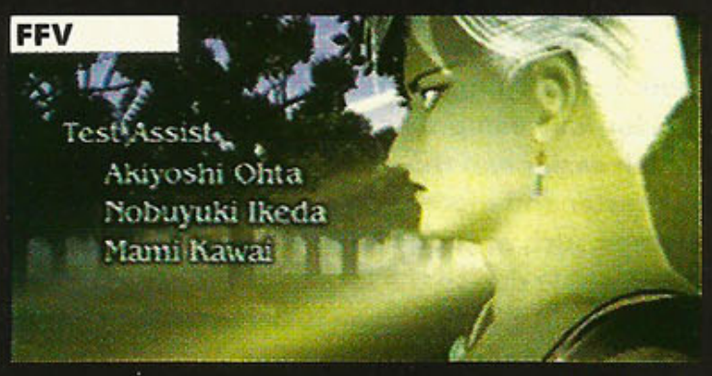


We have been playing a lot of multi-tap games for the Playstation lately and we have noticed an annoying trend. No one has set a standard for which control port that the multi-tap should be plugged into. Some games want the tap to be plugged into port one, with all 4 controllers that are used plugged into the tap. Other games insist that a single controller be plugged into port one while the multi-tap is inserted into port 2. Once you have this all sorted out, you have to figure out just which memory card slot the game will want to use. Heck, WWF Attitude actually checks all 5 memory card slots looking for a saved game. Sony should set rules for how the multi-tap can be used. Some consistency would be nice. Unplugging and moving the multi-tap between games of WWF Attitude, Sled Storm and Bomberman World can get a bit tiresome.

FINAL FANTASY ANTHOLOGY

















Playstation
Square Electronic Arts L.L.C.

Very few games are associated with a genre to the extent that Final Fantasy is. Final Fantasy VII single-handedly brought RPGs into the mainstream because of its extraordinary sales. With its recent promotion to "Greatest Hits" status and the accompanying lower price point, it has rocketed back into the top 10 best selling Playstation games. Final Fantasy VII has been perched atop the "Best RPG" and "Best Game" category at Playstation.com almost since the date of its release. Some games have come along and bumped it off from time to time, but it always regains it status as the number one game. What does one game have that causes such devotion from its fans? That, of course, is the wrong question to ask. Because the truth is, Final Fantasy VII did not reach its current status alone, it built upon the legacy of the six Final Fantasy games before it. Now, an important part of that legacy is available for the first time on the Playstation in the form of Final Fantasy Anthology.

FFA is a collection of both Final Fantasy V and Final Fantasy VI, two of the most influential games in the Final Fantasy Heritage. Both titles originally appeared in Japan on the Super Famicom. While Final Fantasy VI was released in the U.S. as Final Fantasy III, Final Fantasy V has never seen a North American release before now.

FFV was originally released in Japan in 1992. It features what are now considered the classic super-deformed characters (to the uninitiated that would be the "big head, little body" look). While the graphics are dated by today's standards, they were cutting edge at the time. While the visuals then created quite a stir, it was the gameplay innovations that amazed everyone. Final Fantasy V was the first Final Fantasy to introduce the Job system into the FF Universe. This system is featured to some extent in most other Final Fantasy games and is featured prominently in Square's strategy role-playing title for the Playstation, Final Fantasy Tactics.

By allowing much more freedom in customizing characters than was available before, the Job system permits you to mix and match many different abilities and specialize your players as needed. Using the Job system, Square expanded the number of spells and powers available. Now you could choose from white magic, black magic, blue magic, time magic and the power of songs. Of course, the list of magics would not be complete without mentioning the most famous of magics within the Final Fantasy Universe, the summon magic. Final Fantasy V includes some of the earliest incarnations of Final Fantasy staples Shiva, Ramuh, Ifrit and Titan. Any true RPG fan will be enthralled with Final Fantasy V; it is truly the diamond in the rough that U.S. gamers never had a chance to play. However, Square was not happy with just giving us the lost episode of the Final Fantasy series, they also included what is generally regarded as the best game of the series, Final Fantasy VI (again that's part III to us).

Final Fantasy VI is truly a timeless classic. If Final Fantasy V pushed the envelope of what an RPG could be, Final Fantasy VI broke the mold. Featuring the unique Esper magic system, it allowed you to choose over ninety different magic spells. Not only was it a truly exceptional arrangement, it also laid the groundwork for Materia and





Guardian Force systems that would come in later games. It also expanded in other areas including that of hidden characters. These characters are not needed to actually complete the game and are generally hard to find. However, if you were willing to seek them out, they offer peerless power and add to the game's non-linear feel and replayabilty.

Square further enhanced the depth and story lines with the addition of mini quests. These additions were just that and not required in the mission of completing the main quest, but are a virtual necessity to the serious RPGer. These innovations along with many others included within FFVI soon became an essential part of every RPG, showing just how much Final Fantasy has effected the entire genre. Look at games that came before it like Dragon Warrior, sure you may have some fun, but you'll never really get involved. Obviously, no RPG would be complete without an in-depth plot and a revolting archenemy. Final Fantasy VI provides both an earth shattering story and the epitome of pure, maniacal evil, Kefka. Regarded as one of the best videogame villains ever, Kefka embodies all that is wrong in the Final Fantasy Universe. The combination of all of these factors is what makes Final Fantasy VI one of the top RPGs of it's time or, actually, of all time.

Square has given us the opportunity to purchase these two truly classic titles in one beautiful package. In addition, they also included a bunch of collectable goodies to help make the trip more interesting. The game's package contains a soundtrack CD featuring tracks from both titles. Each game also includes brand new computer generated movie sequences that rival the quality seen in Square's other FF games and really helps to carry the story along. Final Fantasy VI also includes a new bonus mode that allows you to watch the game's movies, view additional artwork, browse a complete bestiary and many other secrets. If you have to think twice about buying this collection, you should turn in your RPG fan membership card and take up underwater basket weaving.

Rating (5-95): 95





FINAL FANTASY V

FINAL FANTASY VI

AND A PREVIEW:











WINBACK:
COVERT OPERATIONS

Nintendo 64
Koei

The first time SM saw Winback a few months back, we knew it was going to be a good game. However, Koei was not satisfied with good. They put in the extra effort that takes a good game and makes it truly great. With a solid engine and stellar graphics already in place, Winback went about perfecting its control, eliminating any camera problems and solidifying the multi-player modes.

The control is, quite simply, simple. Using the A button to shoot, the B button to reload, and the analog stick to control Jean Luc, Winback should win an award for ease of use. Of course, the control is more in-depth than that, but those are the only 3 buttons you need to know to be able to pick up the controller and start playing. The little options within the control set-up show off how much effort Koei really put into this title. The ability to set the sight control to normal or reverse is a true godsend to those old flight sim junkies who still use the up-is-down-and-down-is-up setup. Another player prayer has been answered with the inclusion of a sight speed set up. This allows you to move the crosshairs across the screen with either a flick of the wrist or a slow, steady push, depending on the sensitivity you choose.

Winback eliminated most of the camera problems associated with 3-D titles by positioning the camera to behind the player and allowing the limited control over it. Using the left and right C buttons, you can pan the camera 360 degrees around your position to explore your surroundings. This allows you the advantage of seeing everything when you need to, but takes away the requirement to "fight" the camera into position when you just want to continue on.

Finally, we get to the Multi-player modes. Unlike some games where multiplayer action seems like an afterthought, Winback offers a unique, well thought out set of versus arenas. In the 2-player mode, you can choose from many modes including classic deathmatch, lethal tag, quick draw or cube hunt. When you add in a few more friends for a 3 or 4 player game, you can choose point matches and even divide up for team battles.

The extra care and effort that Koei has put in this title really shows. Little touches alone do not make a great game. However, if add them to a good title, they go a long way to making it a classic.

Buzz

From the the Pros and Cons of Console Internet Access Department:
Namco will begin to release patches on their Soul Calibur website. The patches will allow you to access a new stage in the game and different title screens. Of course, this is a good thing but let's hope this doesn't degenerate down to the current state of PC gaming where you buy the game and have to patch the game 15 times to play it.

Sega of America has confirmed that AT&T will be the official online provider for Dreamcast. The AT&T DC Worldnet service package will cost $21.95 a month for unlimited access or $19.95 a month for 150 hours. A free Dreamcast Keyboard will be included for signing up.

From the In Your Dreamcast Department:
Bernie Stolar President and COO of Sega resigned from his position August 11. No reason was given as to why. What effect that will have on Sega has yet to be seen. Although Sega assures SM that everything is fine.

Tecmo has (finally) announced Dead or Alive 2 for Dreamcast. The DC version will be released about six months after the Naomi arcade version is released.

Good news for RPG fans planning on getting a DC. UFO Interactive has signed a deal with NEC to distribute their Dreamcast titles in US. The first title will be Seventh Cross, followed by Black Matrix and Sengoku Turbo.

Sega of America has announced that the Dreamcast will come with a demo disc featuring playable demos of 7 different games and video footage of a few others. The playable games include the likes of Powerstone, Sonic Adventure and Ready 2 Rumble

Tomy's wrestling title New Japan Pro Wrestling Toukon Retsuden IV will be released in Japan on September 30.

Sega has confirmed that both Fighting Force 2 and WWF Attitude are coming to Dreamcast.

Titus' first Dreamcast title will be the driving game Roadsters and is being developed by Player 1.

New info on Castlevania Resurrection for the Dreamcast. The quality of the graphics we saw were head and shoulders above anything in the series so far. Incredible lighting and highly detailed backgrounds were the order of the day. The title is in 3-D and the story is a prequel of the Castlevania series. The hook? A 2000 release.

Sakura Taisen Columns 2, the new game by Red (the maker of Thousand Arms) will support the DC Modem allowing you to play opponents via the Internet

Rockstar has pushed back the release date of Wild Metal from September to January of 2000, most likely for further fine tuning.

From the May the Force Be With You...No, Wait, You Own a Playstation Department:
Lucas Arts has canceled the release of Star Wars Episode 1: Racer for the Playstation. However, Activision has announced that they will bring a Star Trek game to the Playstation, hopefully within a year. It will be based on the ST: Next Generation series.

From the See quels, See quels come, come sequels come! Department:
New info on The Legend of Zelda Gaiden for the N64 has been released. It will use the same and now dated graphics engine from Zelda: Ocarina of Time, but will feature new stages and areas. New features include the ability to ride on baby Epona when you are young link. A new Zelda game is also in the works for the Game boy Color.

Konami will release the US version of Suikoden 2 on September 7, just to make it a little more difficult to decide what to spend your money on. A special note to go with this months Wanted! section: Konami is set to release Beat Mania Append 4th Mix. The beat goes on in Japan for Playstation on September 9.

Capcom will include a Resident Evil 3 demo with Dino Crisis when it is released. They will also up the difficulty of DC from the Japanese version.

Chrono Cross, the sequel of Chrono Trigger for the SNES is for real and should be coming out on the Playstation in Japan by the end of the year. Featuring realistic character designs (ala Final Fantasy VIII), the backgrounds will be hand-drawn 2-D during normal exploration and will switch to 3-D during fight sequences. Chrono Cross along with Legend of Mana, Dew Prism and Vagrant Story have been confirmed for U.S. release in 2000. Unofficial Square Bonus Rumor: The original Chrono Trigger might find it's way to the Playstation.

GT interactive announced that if more than 1 million units of Driver were sold, they would consider working on a sequel. Ten minutes later they were forced to announce a sequel. Rumor has it that the console of choice for the sequel will be the Playstation, although Dreamcast will get Driver too.

4 player Destruction Derby? Only on the N64. Destruction Derby 64 is set to have a variety of 4 player modes including deathmatch and capture the flag.

Tenchu: Shinobi 100 is scheduled for release in Japan this November. The title will feature at least 100 new missions created by fans for a Tenchu Mission Creation contest run by a Japanese game magazine.

Konami is working on Exciting Bass 2 (that would be Fisherman's Bait 2 in the US). The new game is rumored to be compatible with ASCII's awesome new fishing controller. Konami also released new info on Castlevania: Special Edition for N64. C:SE will allow you take control of the werewolf Kohnel to search for the Dark Lord. New levels and enemies will be added and the graphics improved.

Capcom has announced that they are currently working on Breath of Fire IV for the Playstation. Look for improved graphics (good) and a return of some of Breath of Fire III's characters (bad).

It's official, you can finally put away your Colecovision. Infogrames has announced they will be bringing out a Smurf game on the Playstation!

From the Is That a System in Your Pocket or Are You Just Glad To See Me Department:
The Neo Geo Pocket Color game SNK vs Capcom: Clash Card Fighters is set to hit this fall in Japan. The game will be released as 2 different versions simultaneously, ala Pokemon, with a Capcom Fan and SNK Fan Version. The game will feature of a total cards of 300 with some exclusive to each title.

SNK has confirmed that Sonic the Hedgehog is officially coming to the Neo Geo Pocket Color.

Nintendo of America will release a special edition Pokemon version of the Game boy Color to go with the release of Pokemon Yellow in the US. Speaking of new Pokemon games, here are some neat new features that will be included in Pokemon Gold and Silver. The main character will have a new peripheral called Pocket Gear. It will function as a counter, data organizer, cellular phone and radio. The games will also include date specific events that will occur on certain real time dates (Christmas, Halloween, etc...).

Eidos has announced that they will be publishing Enix's Dragon Warrior Monsters-Terry's Wonderland for Game boy Color. Expect it this winter.

Jaleco will bring their Playstation virtual adventure game Battle Insects to Game boy Color in Japan. Kind of a Pokemon with bugs, BI lets you capture, breed and train bugs and battle against other characters.

From The Endless Playstation 2 Hype Department:
Square is currently developing 3 new titles for Playstation 2. The only confirmed title at this point is Ehrgeiz II. Also Enix announced that they are developing 4 new titles for Playstation 2.

Crystal Dynamics has confirmed that they are developing titles for Playstation 2.

Koei has announced their first Playstation 2 title, Kessen-Decisive Battle. A classic Japanese civil war strategy game, it is just one of 4 titles they are working on for the Playstation 2. One of the titles is being co-developed with unnamed partner. For more info see page 14.

Titus recently announced that it plans to develop products for all the next-millennium systems including Playstation 2.

Namco confirmed that they are developing new versions of Tekken and Ridge Racer for Playstation 2.

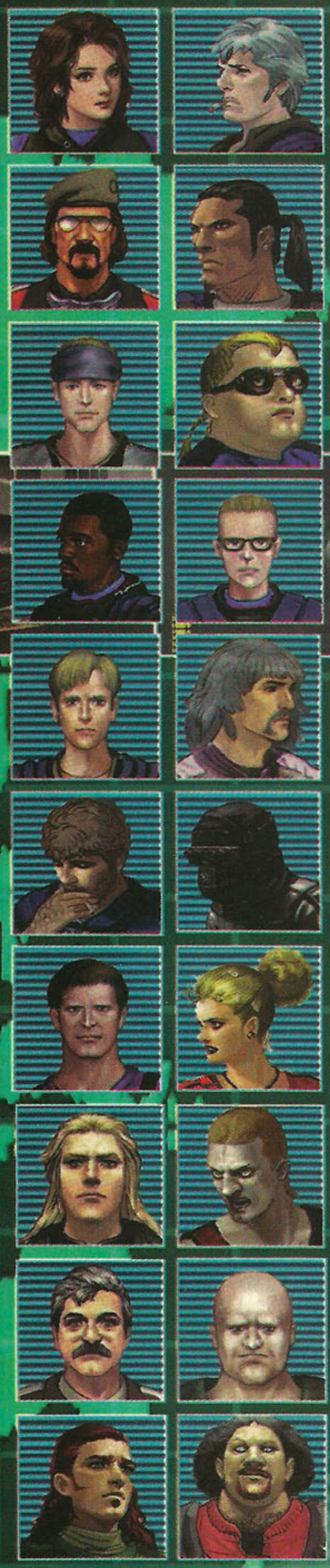
T&E Soft announced that they are working on a new golf title for PSX2. The expected release date is sometime THIS winter in Japan. (How's that for a subtle hint for when the Playstation 2 will be out).

From the If I Knew Infogrames Was Going to be This Big, I Would Have Studied in My French Class Department:
Infogrames is working on Time Loop for Playstation. A popular arcade puzzle game in Japan, you have to shoot colored puzzle balls into a spiral.

Infogrames will bring the action shooter Incoming to Dreamcast. In a final bit of news, insider info also confirms a DC version of Worms is in the works. Cool!

Infogrames will release two Dreamcast titles on September 9. The games are Pen Pen (named Pen Pen Tricelon in Japan) and Millennium Soldiers-Expendable (named Expendable in Japan).

The first blast wiped out your Space Center. In just 3 hours, the high-tech weapons satellite will strike again...It's your job to make sure that it doesn't.



"Explosive N64 adventure"
...Nintendo Power



4 - Player Deathmatch, along with Lethal Tag, Cube Hunt, And Quick Draw.



- Intense 3rd Person Action/Shooter
- Precision laser-sighting aiming mechanism
- Immense 3D Environments
- Battle heavily-armed Boss Characters and "smart" enemies
- Rumble Pak Support

WINBACK
COVERT OPERATIONS

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NINTENDO 64

Only For

TEEN T AGES 13+ CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

KOEI

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Prospects

Trick Style

Dreamcast
Acclaim entertainment

Ok, we'll state the obvious: Trick Style has some seriously impressive visuals. Furthermore, TS is a glimpse of what's to come. Think back about five years ago when Battle Arena Tohshinden first hit the market. The visuals were simply the best anyone had ever seen. Now skip forward a few years and compare the graphics to a game like Tekken 3. Pretty amazing difference, eh? The fact still remains that to date we have yet to see better visuals anywhere. This is a first generation game and that really bodes well for the Dreamcast's future. Now that we've gotten that out of our system, we'll move on.

TS has a lot of great gameplay to offer. Set far in the future, you select one of eight extreme competitors and hover race for fame and glory. (Actually, we were reminded of Back to the Future 2's hover boarding scenes.) A nice touch is that you have to earn your tricks as opposed to just starting the game with them. This way, you have to master the nuances of the control ahead of time. Once you start racing every trick will not only help you look cool, but help you to win more races.

Acclaim wisely chose to use the VMS as more than just a memory card. The VMS mini game is called Trick Style Jr. While not a substitute for owning a portable, it is still amusing.







NHL Championship: 2000









Playstation
Fox Sports

Lace up your skates and grab a stick or just grab your Playstation controller because Fox Sports has thrown its hat into the hockey rink with the debut of NHL Championship 2000.

NHL Championship 2000 brings us all the Fox Sports trademarks and a healthy dose of "Fox Attitude". Fans of the Fox Trax will be awed to see their 90-mph slap shot fly across the TV screen followed by the infamous red streak. Award winning announcers Kenny Albert and John Davidson will be calling all of the shots. The play-by-play never lacks enthusiasm and adds to the game.

Does your favorite team need a star center or a scoring defense-man? Fear not, NHL 2000 has you covered. With the option to act as the general manager by creating, editing or trading your players, you should have no problems filling the holes in your roster.

The gameplay is very smooth with crisp puck movement, precise one timers and acrobatic goalies. With Dual Shock Analog support, when you get body checked into the boards by your opponent, you can actually feel the impact. You have to be careful around the boards though, one too many hard checks could result in some shattered glass. If body checks aren't enough for you, NHL Championship 2000 isn't afraid to drop the gloves by including the much-loved fighting feature.

With close attention to game play and detail, Fox Sport's NHL Championship 2000 looks to have a promising rookie season ahead of it.

Gekido

Playstation
Interplay

It's been a while since Interplay has release a console game and it's good to see that they're still alive and kicking. Not much is known about Gekido except that there are 15 levels and it's a side scrolling fighter. Up to four players can duke it out in a special versus mode. It is not known how many people can play in the story mode, but SM thinks two is a pretty safe bet. Gekido's looking good. Look for more info sometime soon.





WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A KAMIKAZE & A BLUE IMPULSE PILOT?

(2METERS)





AEROWINGS









Sega Dreamcast™

RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

CRI
CSK Research Institute

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Slave Zero

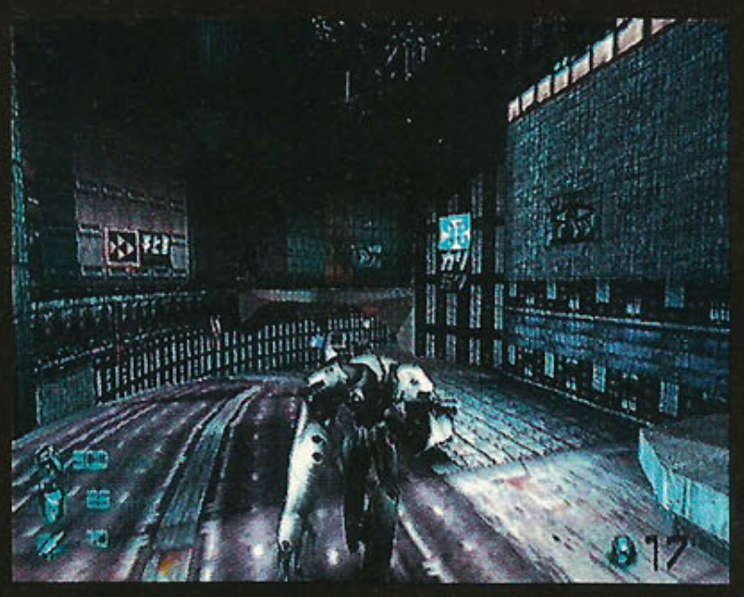
Dreamcast
Infogrames

The Dreamcast has yet to let us down. This new game from Infogrames is violence and destruction at an unmatched level. Picture this: you highjack a 60-foot tall mech and have one mission, destroy.

The game takes place in the future in a seven-mile high city. The player must fight his way to the top to exact some payback. Slave Zero comes equipped with enough firepower to flatten a city. Hand to hand weapons can be picked up like steel girders, sewage pipes and support beams. They can then be used as close combat weapons or thrown from a distance. We had the most fun just picking up cars, tossing them against the ground and enjoying the explosion.

The game starts out with the player standing in the middle of a highway. We spent a lot of time just standing there watching the cars react to us. They would react in many different ways. Some would screech on their brakes right in front of us, some would swerve off the road, while others would honk and go around us. We watched as one hit the brakes, then the one behind it slammed into the first one and blew up. As we explored, we found a deep chasm. What do you do when you find a deep hole? Throw something down it, of course! We picked up a car and threw it down the hole and watched as the headlights spun slowly into the abyss. The levels flowed quickly as there seemed to be no alternative routes making exploration unnecessary, but a couple of well placed ledges usually hid some power-ups to keep gameplay fun.

It is hard to believe that Slave Zero is a first generation game. Violence really is more fun at 128 bits.



Thrasher Magazine's:
skate and Destroy

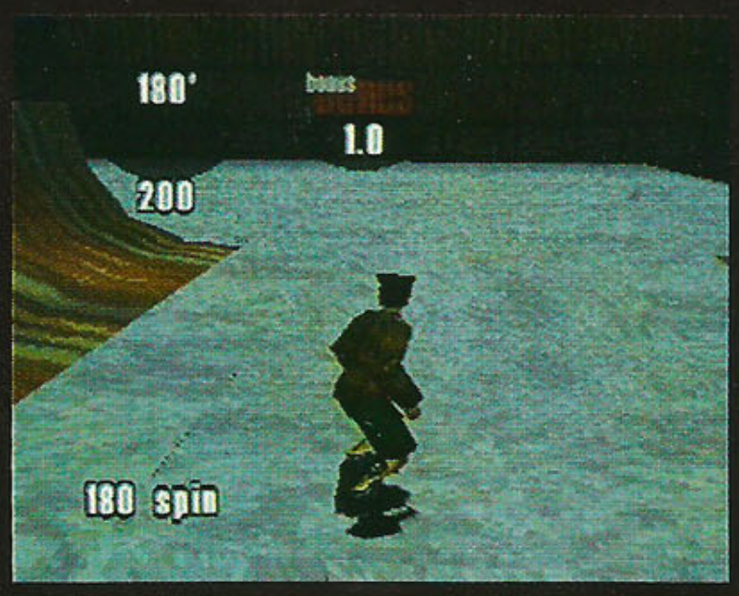
Playstation
Rockstar

There are two things you can always count on when it comes to 'boarding. First, real skaters don't wear pads and secondly they never miss an issue of Thrasher.

Z-Axis/Rockstar and Thrasher magazine are all working very closely to make THE authentic skateboarding simulation. You start out skating in your hometown, shredding the local scene. Pull off tricks and earn as many points as you can before the cops show up. While skateboarding is not a crime, when you hear the sirens and the bear claws hit the ground, you had still better head for the exit.

As you hone your skills, you earn access to new skate parks. However, these are not some programmer's idea of what a skate park should look like, they are actual parks in real cities reproduced down to the smallest details. If you're good enough, you can even earn sponsorship from various deck, truck and accessory manufacturers.

With skaters ranging from grinders to technique freaks, there are no lack of characters to choose from and Rockstar even included a female character for all the skater grrls out there. From what we've heard (Wow, a skateboarding game with music 'boarders actually listen to!) what we have seen, (realistic graphics and physics-aware crashes) and what we have felt (tight control), this is a game that truly does the Thrasher name justice.







Wu Tang:
Shaolin Style

Playstation
Activision

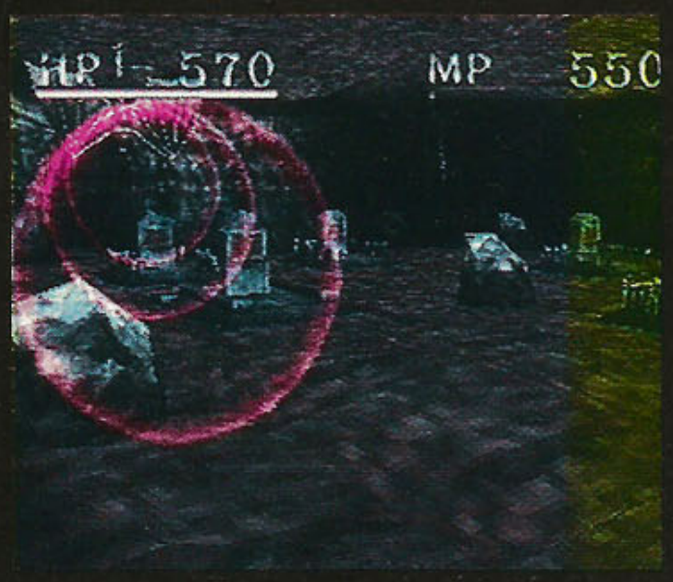
What happens when you cross martial arts with hip-hop? As anyone who remembers the names "Shaq Fu" or "Revolution-X" will tell you, the idea of entertainers in videogames is hardly a new concept. Unlike other entertainer-licensed games, however, Wu-Tang: Shaolin Style has something going for it: It doesn't seem half-bad.

Featuring all nine Wu-Tang members, this hip-hop brawler gives each member of the group a distinct fighting style in line with his own personality and style. You can have up to four players at once in an arena, which quickly becomes hectic.

Unfortunately, there was no music in this unfinished version, so there was no sign of the 3 exclusive tracks that will be included in the game's soundtrack. In all though, this one seems to be shaping up to be one fast, fun and loud game. With some tweaking, Shaolin Style could be the best used license this side of Goldeneye.



SHADOW TOWER



Playstation
Agetec

Its seems as though today RPGs have become a dime a dozen. Same old story line and the same old adventure setup. Fortunately, Shadow Tower is on its way to breaking this same old theme.

You play a young warrior battling his way through the darkness of an ancient tower. The tower is broken down into 6 different worlds, each world having a powerful leader to defeat. As you wander around these different areas, through hidden walls and tunnels, you will talk to various helpful creatures that give crucial advice in enigmatic riddles. Listening to these riddles will aid you in your quest.

Unlike most RPGs this game is played strictly from the first person perspective, which is unique in itself. It will take more than just luck to kill these enemies; you will have to use your skills and abilities to their fullest. Shadow Tower contains a nice little feature in that after encountering these various creatures they will be added to your creature book. Your creature book contains all the info about these enemies that you will need to know.

If battling these creatures in the various worlds isn't enough, Shadow Tower contains a versus mode. You can pick through the list of available enemies to battle against one on one or battle against a human opponent in the 2-player mode. You can also choose from various items to help your one on one battle. Shadow Tower has potential.

EARTHWORM JIM 3-D

Nintendo 64
Rockstar

Good ol' Jim is back and now he's in 3-D. The bad news or good news, case depending, is that Jim will only be available on the Nintendo 64. From what was playable at press time, Jim will still bear his trademarks of hysterical jokes and stages, while maintaining enjoyable gameplay.

Here's the plot. Jim's lost his marbles and playing as his Ego, or Super Ego shall we say, the player must navigate through Jim's warped mind looking for them. In every level there are mini-missions like helping Captain Cluck of the Poultry Platoon get back his stolen briefs (not his top secret plans, but rather his underwear). We could not help but crack up at the game as we collected the golden utters for the Cow of Contemplation.

The gameplay, although 3-D now, remains largely the same as in previous games. Jim still has a worm whip, a jump, and a shoot function to get him though this new episode, but new to his list of skills is the duck and roll button for avoiding missiles, bullets and the like. One major difference in gameplay is that Jim must find his marbles. Unlike previous games where getting through the level was enough, that won't cut it here. Each stage must be searched carefully.

The graphics are nothing less than expected from the 64, nice smooth characters and fluid animations can be seen everywhere in the game. Jim still has that super hero walk and the insane expression when firing his gun. Sound is also top of the line with Jim spouting off comments now and then.

We have waited a long time for this worm, let's hope he delivers as he has in the past.







NBA BASKETBALL 2000

NBA Basketball 2000
Fox Sports

Fox Sports has finally decided to take a shot at the basketball market with its Playstation release of NBA Basketball 2000 and they have recruited Steve Smith of the Atlanta Hawks to consult on the gameplay.

Fox Sports Net's innovative instant replays and proprietary camera angles add a very realistic effect. Watching your team's pre-game warm-ups and player intros make it seem like you are right there in the arena eating nachos and spilling your beer.

With reverse dunks, fade away jump shots and alley-oops, the game features everything that basketball fans crave. If your players are looking a little rusty then take them to the practice court to polish up those skills. You can even adjust strategies depending on your preferences as player, coach or general manager. Call set plays on the fly and you will be amazed as your teammates work their magic. The game also has a great auto sub feature that cuts down the hassle of manually subbing for fatigued players or for those players in foul trouble.

If Fox Sports continues to refine and tweak this title, we could have a new PSX basketball champion on our hands.



KESSEN • PLAYSTATION 2 PREVIEW •













Playstation 2
Koei

This preview is not a joke. These are ACTUAL game screens from Kessen one of the first confirmed PSX2 games. What is known is that Kessen will be ready to ship this winter if not at the system's launch, then very shortly afterwards. The productions costs are expected to run around U.S. $4.1 million. However, sales are expected to hit 1 million copies worldwide.

Kessen is a strategy title that as Koei puts it, "focuses on group battle elements". We're not sure what that exactly means, but an Internet mode where you can play opponents in real time may be the answer or maybe multiple players working together against a computer or other human opponent(s) is the other obvious possibility. What we do know is that Koei knows how to do strategy games as the Romance series has proven.

As the pictures indicate (the two in the first column are exclusive) the graphics are top notch. While no better than what we've seen on Dreamcast, Kessen is a strategy game and the genre tends to focus on gameplay. Considering the number of characters with all of the atmospheric effects like dust clouds and solar flares, it's obvious that the PSX2 has some serious processing power. Thankx Amos!

NHL FACEOFF 2000

Playstation
989 Sports

Are you tired of hockey games where scoring a goal has become a bit like solving the most complex of math problems? Well somebody has finally figured out that there is a happy medium between the ease of scoring and the impossibility of scoring a goal. NHL Faceoff 2000 is not playing around this year and 989 signed Scotty Bowman on to consult heavily on this year's gameplay. Whether you are an expert player who loves an extremely fast paced game or a beginner that likes a slower paced game NHL Faceoff 2000 has you covered with the option to adjust the speed of the gameplay.

This title offers a unique gameplay camera angle that is not found in most other hockey games, but after getting used to it; you will quickly fall in love with it. The gameplay is smooth and very true to life. The shooting accuracy is very much on target and you will be able see the effects of your slap shot on the other team's goalie as his Gatorade bottle go flying through the air in a bout of anger. Even the crowd really likes to get involved in the action; various chants and screams are just a part of their repertoire.

Solid gameplay is the cornerstone of this title and for that very reason this is one to watch closely.







THE CREATORS OF COMMAND & CONQUER™ ARE TURNING UP THE HEAT.

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

DUNE™ 2000

PlayStation





- Real-time strategy blended with blazing action
- Sharp, 3D terrain with true elevation
- Play three distinct sides across 30 missions
- Dozens of 3D-modeled units specific to each side
- Solo play, head-to-head, or skirmish versus the AI
- Pulsing cinematics and soundtrack

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RETROSPECT

DREAMCAST

SM's Rating system is based upon a scale of 5-95 and measured in increments of 5. 50 is average and 95 almost perfect.

Import Tuner Presents: Tokyo Xtreme Racer
Crave

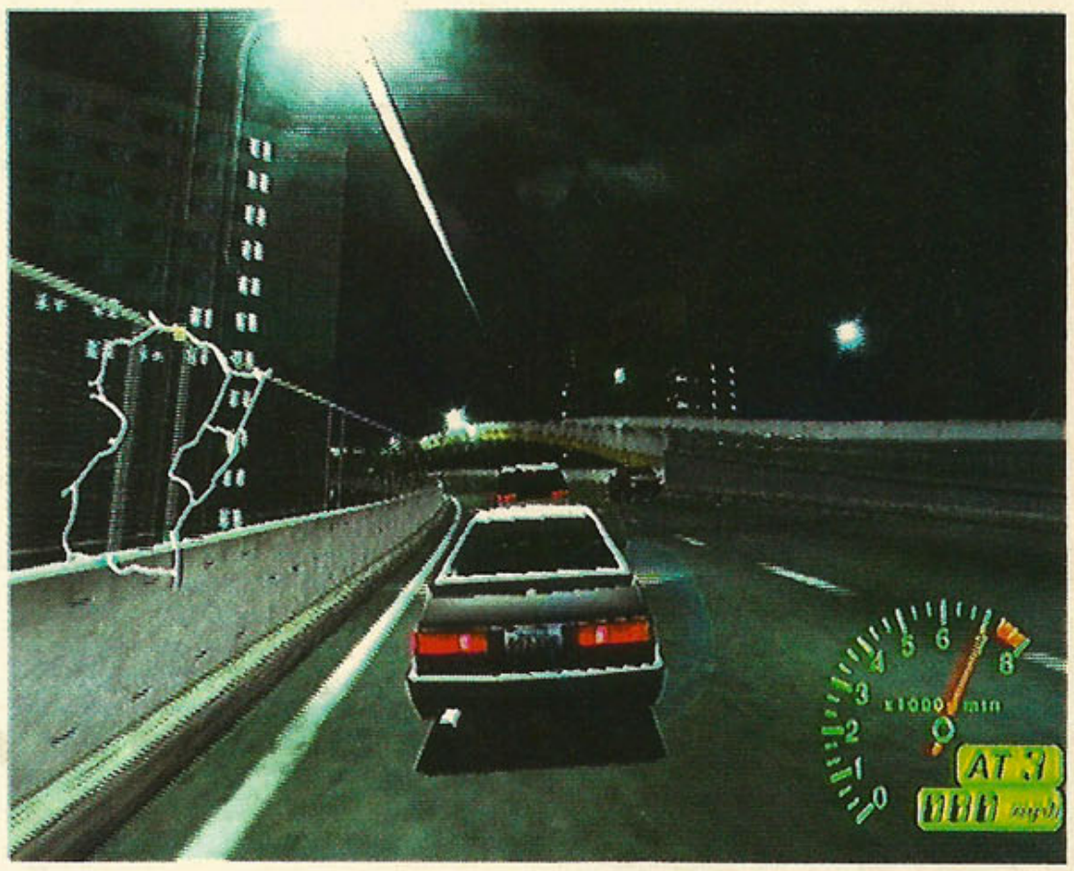
When it comes down to it, racing games have always been something home consoles have done pretty well, but to get the true arcade look and feel, you still needed to drop a few quarters. The most obvious indication that Tokyo Xtreme Racer has something special to offer would be the groundbreaking graphics. While the cars are a bit boxy, they are eons ahead of anything else on the market. SM has never seen a racing game in the home or arcade move this smoothly with such lush visuals. All of the races take place at night and all of the light sources like taillights and street lamps streak and blur as you rush by.

Despite the top end visuals, Tokyo Xtreme Racer's strongest feature is easily the gameplay. The cars control really well and even a novice can pick the game up and start playing. However if you want to collect enough Speed Points (winning races earns points) to buy faster cars, you'll need to learn the subtleties of the control. We liked the way the left trigger is used for breaking and the right for acceleration thus freeing up your thumbs to manipulate the analog controller and the four function buttons.

Part of the genius of this title is the fact that it takes place on a fairly realistic highway and there are not set starting or finishing lines like in a traditional racer. When you run into a car that will race you (indicated by a red flag), the contest does not just begin. First you need to size up the situation. For instance, if your competition's car accelerates faster than your car does and the section of highway is relatively straight, you do not have to challenge them to a race. What you can do is move on and look for another race or you can keep close to them until you're on a section of highway that is to your advantage. Once you initiate the race (You challenge by driving right up behind them and flash your brights until they get the idea), it's just you and an opponent in a one on one race. You still have to watch out for every other car, truck and van on the road. The clever player will find ways to use the other vehicles to their advantage.

There's also a two-player versus mode that's a great deal of fun. We did notice a tad of slowdown when the cars would pass each other. That's about the only flaw we could find within the whole game, and it's a minor one at that. This title easily earns a buy recommendation from Silicon Magazine. It's pure Tobasco.
Rating (5-95): 90





Sega Bass Fishing
Sega

Fishing games have been around for a long time. It has only been lately that they've become popular. Maybe game developers are really getting desperate for new ideas or maybe gamers are become more sophisticated. Regardless, Sega Bass Fishing is the best fishing title we've yet played. It has just the right blend of arcade and simulation action to get you into the game and keep you hooked.

The game is not controlled with the standard controller. It comes packaged with a solidly built rod/reel controller that is a pleasure to use. When the fish strikes, the reel controller vibrates and jumps around much like a real fishing pole would. Right now, you have to get the game and controller as a package, but future fishing games will use the reel controller, so it is a one time purchase.

DC can generate some amazing visuals and a game that is trying to reproduce being out doors needs great graphics to help convince the gamer they are indeed fishing. Sega Bass does that and so very well. Most importantly SBF never gets boring. SM recommends Sega Bass not only for its beauty and high replay value, but also for the thrilling fishing experience.
Rating (5-95): 90



Sonic Adventure
Sega

Part of what hurt the Saturn early on was that it lacked a mascot title and when Sonic finally arrived on the system, it was way too little, way too late. Sega has learned from past mistakes and Sonic Adventure was a launch title in Japan and will be one here.

Sega was wise to play up Sonic's strengths. The 3-D worlds are easily handled by the DC hardware and huge corkscrew turns fly by at lightening speeds. Collecting rings as you explore familiar worlds like the Emerald Coast will be fun for Sonic veterans and younger gamers alike. In an effort to add a bit of depth to the title, in addition to Sonic, there are five more characters to play.

It is difficult to get away from the feeling of been there, done that. While SA is a pretty good game, considering all of the other titles available, it failed to really grab and hold our attention. Still it is the best iteration of the series thus far and if you're a fan or have a younger gamer in the family, Sonic Adventure may be worth a look.
Rating (5-95): 65

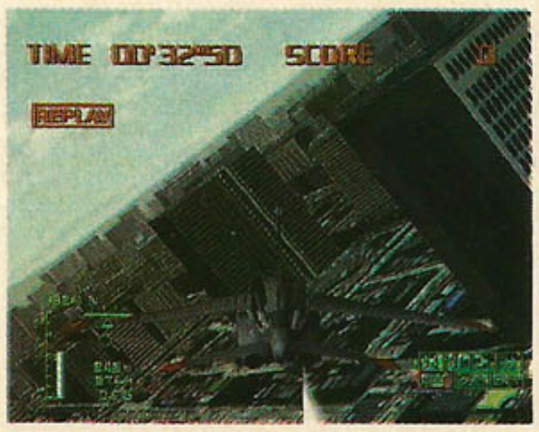


Aero Wings
Crave

In Aero Wings, you take on the roll of a stunt pilot and are assigned varied missions that test your skills. You perform tasks like weaving in and out of cityscapes or painting the sky with a smoke trail. Subtlety and finesse are this title's trademark.

The first thing we recommend doing is completing the training mode before attempting the main game. The overall experience is more interesting with a working knowledge of the flight system.

Graphically, we had no complaints. The horizon drew in smoothly and every polygon was solid. Aero Wings is replayable and different.
Rating (5-95): 80



RETROSPECT



Soul Calibur
Namco
Dear Lord! If you have been thinking about buying a Dreamcast, come September 9, DO IT! If for no other game, Soul Calibur makes it worth it. Namco has created another masterpiece that is actually better than the arcade original. Just as Ridge Racer and Tekken were the games that drew people to the Playstation on its launch day, now Namco will help launch another system with a great game.

Mere words are barely able to describe the game, let alone the graphics. Imagine the most perfect in game graphics of a fighting game character you have ever seen, then kiss them good bye. Soul Calibur is better than anything we have seen thus far. Every single polygon is flicker free, the shading and texture mapping is state of the art and far better than anything in existence. The level of detail is incredible all the way down to blinking eyes, the lips moving when there is dialogue and warm breath on the cold stages. The backgrounds were also touched up to give an extra 3-D feel. SC is a graphical masterpiece.

Those who have played Soul Blade on the Playstation will remember with fondness the Edge Master mode. Yes, it is back and as hard as ever. Additionally, the new Mission mode has the player competing for points that can then be spent on pictures in one of the numerous Soul Calibur art



galleries. Not only are the pictures cool to look at, but the more you buy, the more new fights open up and the more extra features become available. The Mission Mode is itself a great idea. One level has glowing rats that will bite your feet in combat if you step on them and another has quicksand that your character will sink into unless you keep moving. Our favorite level was Sophitia's. Since the ground is covered with ice, the wind slides both characters to one side so ring outs are rather common unless side stepping is mastered (thinking he was being really clever, one editor referred to this stage as "slick," he was dragged outside and beaten).

Namco has always packed its fighting titles with goodies and SC is no exception. Every character that beats the game opens a secret character. Some of the secret characters include Cervantes, Siegfried, Hwang, Lizard Man and Yoshimitsu of Tekken fame. Players can also earn the Exhibition mode where the chosen character steps alone into the ring and demonstrates his moves (Maxi has two exhibitions, one with one nunchaku and the other with two nunchaku).

This game will be the big thing on 9.9.99, so be sure to reserve a Dreamcast and this game as we are sure that both will be in very high demand once the general public sees what Namco and Sega can do together.
Rating (5-95): 90





PLAYSTATION

Bass Landing
Agetec
Your first hint of things to come should be the controller that is packed in with Bass Landing. It actually looks and feels like a fishing rod. The first thing you should do once you start up a game is start the training mode. This tutorial is one of the most detailed and extensive that we have ever seen in any game. You will spend literally hours learning all you need to know about fishing.

As a video game fishing veterans, we immediately skipped the training and went right to open fishing. A half-hour later it was back to the training with our collective tails between our legs with the knowledge that having caught lunkers in other games counted for nothing in Bass Landing.

Realism and adjustability are the order of the day in this title. Lures work just like their real life counterparts, so choosing the right lure does not guarantee you will catch fish. The right lures, the right color, the right technique, and the wrong weather conditions will still lead to an empty live well. Unlike other Playstation fishing games, Bass Landing does not cheat by letting you see underwater. This teaches you to rely on the vibration of the controller and small visual clues to ensure success.

A great controller, excellent graphics, and true to life gameplay make Bass Landing the best fishing game available for the Playstation. The deliberate pace and knowledge intensive gameplay may put off some gamers, but those with patience will be rewarded (hmmm, kind of like real fishing.) Expect to see a lot of copies of BL with the inscription "To Dad" under this Christmas tree this year.
Rating (5 to 95): 80



Sled Storm
Electronic Arts
We've raced everything from cars to kangaroos at SM and Sled Storm is our first Snowmobile racing game. After taking it out for a spin, we hope it's not the last. Sled Storm is a prime example of what a title can be when everything comes together. From the superb graphics to the soundtrack that features Rob Zombie and Econoline Crush, everything really meshes.

The gameplay has you racing through a championship circuit earning points and cash to purchases upgrades ala the old road rash titles. While as much fun as the Road Rash titles, SS adds a few new advances like support for up to 4 players via the multi-tap and the ability to pull off tricks for points. The ability to trade in your points for cash makes the tricks more than just a novelty. No racing title would be complete without hidden stuff and SS comes through with style. Our favorite option was the incredible night races. With just the glow of your headlight to lead the way, a whole new challenge was added and the lighting effects were incredible.

SS does have a few drawbacks; the game is a little easy and can sometimes suffer from a bit of pop-up. However, the overall fun of this title will have you overlooking these minor flaws. Get ready to take it to the snow with Sled Storm. Just watch out for those cute fuzzy snow bunnies, they're worth 7500 points.
Rating (5-95): 85



NCAA Gamebreaker
989 Sports
Whoa, Nellie! NCAA Gamebreaker 2000 is here and it has brought us a vastly improved AI and some welcomed new features. This year's edition features NCAA football's play by play icon Keith Jackson as the commentator. Keith Jackson's descriptive tidbits and infamous quotes are both comical and entertaining.

Gamebreaker 2000 offers 5

Continued On Page 18...

RETROSPECT

...Continued From Page 17

different types of play modes, including a newly improved career mode. The career mode now includes blue chip recruiting. So, just like the real life recruits, they now have preferences on what school they would like to attend. Each new season in your career will bring different objectives for your school's program, adding to the replay value. You can now export you graduation seniors to NFL Gameday 2000 for the NFL draft, so no longer do you have to say a last goodbye to your seniors.

The gameplay has been heavily improved upon. The players now seem to be able to cut on a dime and the precise laterals will have you wanting to run the wishbone offense. The passing game is a little less polished, and will leave you scratching your head at times. With the new option to showoff or celebrate, you can watch as your wide receiver does a hand plant or your QB does a flip in the air. With newly added features and refined playability, Gamebreaker 2000 is a winner.

Rating (5-95): 85

LOK: Soul Reaver
Eidos

If video games were movies, Blood Omen: The Legacy of Kain would be "El Mariachi" and Legacy Of Kain: Soul Reaver would be "Desperado".

Blood Omen: LOK was a cult classic, known for its premise, plot and fascinating characters. LOK:SR is what happens when you keep all the strong points of a game, rework everything else, and put some serious money, time and effort into it.

Fans of the original will recognize Kain and a few areas of Nozgoth, but not much else. The world of Nozgoth has changed since the first game. It has changed for the better graphics-wise, but for the worse for the vampires and humans within the game. If the vampire-infested world of Nozgoth is not bleak enough, you also shift between the "real" world of Nozgoth and the Spectral world that lays parallel to it on another plane. The graphical effect of switching between worlds is stunning and you will find yourself watching it just as intently the twentieth time as you did the first.

As a third-person perspective game, you spend a lot of time looking at the main character, Raziel. His animations and appearance are excellent. LOK: SR also does a good job of keeping the infamous, "3rd person adventure camera" problem to a minimum. Sometimes you will notice a few graphical hiccups, but nothing that really affects gameplay. The control is respectable, but some moves are inexplicably hard to execute and the analog control just isn't precise enough and you'll find yourself using the digital by default.

The music and sound effects add to the overall gothic feel of the title and really hold the mood. The voiceovers are extremely noteworthy, as they are some of the finest to grace the Playstation this year. With the help of this fantastic voice acting, Raziel gives Lestat a run for his money as the coolest vampire.

Crystal Dynamics seems to have really nailed down what it takes to make a good 3-D engine. Now, if we could only get Robert Rodriguez to direct a Soul Reaver movie.

Rating (5-95): 85



RC Stunt Copter
Titus

As a public service announcement, Silicon Magazine would like to describe the warning labels that would come with RC Stunt Copter, if it were required to have one.

"Danger! Seriously realistic simulation within! The game enclosed in extremely volatile. May cause violent mood swings ranging for smug self-satisfaction upon completion of the most basic of tasks (like landing a RC Copter) to controller smashing fits of rage due to the inability to complete the simplest of tasks (such as flying a RC Copter in a straight line.) Due to the sarcastic and EXTREMELY humorous instruction and voice-over included, it is best viewed as a bystander. Being on the receiving end of the humor while playing RC Stunt Copter may cause unwanted symptoms (talking back to the television, excessive mumbling of 4-letter words under your breath.)"

"Warning! RC Stunt Copter is extremely addictive! Side effects include bouts of "Just one more try" syndrome and "reset reflex syndrome". Beware: May cause sleeplessness. Do not taunt RC Stunt

Continued On Page 19...

Final Fantasy VIII
Square Electronic Arts L.L.C.

No RPG series creates the kind anticipation and high expectations that Final Fantasy does. With each release, Square is expected to surpass every other title on the market and set a new high-water mark. Congratulations Square, you've managed to do it again.

From the opening CG movie to the incredible in-game graphics, you realize that the bar has been raised once again. The movies within Final Fantasy VIII are simply the best available on the Playstation, Period. And as impossible as it may seem, Final Fantasy VIII's Guardian Forces actually improved upon the look of FFVII's summoning spells. Square has also done away with the super-deformed look of the previous Final Fantasies and made the jump to full sized characters. FFVIII seems to have improved graphically in every since its predecessor with the exception of the overhead map, which comes out looking bland in comparison.

Square also took some radical departures from the tried and true way of traditional RPGs. Gone are days of Magic Points, finding gold on the carcasses of dead monsters, and taking a nap to refill your magic spells. The use of Magic Points to cast spells has been done away with completely. You are now required to "Draw" magic from enemies you encounter. Drawing is an essential part of FFVIII, with some Guardian Forces only accessible by drawing them out of various bosses. Summoning Guardian Forces doesn't require MP's either, since each one has it's own hit points and it's up to you to keep them alive.

The new magic junction system, which uses magic to enhance your abilities, offers the appealing option of either setting it up yourself or letting the game handle the task. This option should satisfy both the casual player and the get-your-hands-dirty type.

FFVIII also includes an mini game in the form of Triple Triad. (AKA the card game). Just one of many incredible minigames to be found, TT extends throughout the entire game and can literally double your playing time once it draws you in. With the ability to change cards into items, Triple Triad weaves its way into the actual gameplay and gives you a reason to search out card players besides just the thrill of getting all the cards.

The story (covered in SM 12) intertwined within FFVIII is possibly the best that Final Fantasy has ever had to offer. With plenty of twists and turns, it has the habit of catching you by surprise. Oddly, some of the characters involved in the story lack any real appeal. Zell and Selphie failed to really ever engage us. On the other hand, Squall, Laguna, Seifer, and Irvine drew us in almost at once.

Final Fantasy VIII is a phenomenal journey. You'll find yourself playing to see what is around the next corner until the early hours of the morning. If that is not a testament to a great RPG, we don't know what is.

Rating (5-95): 90









RETROSPECT

NFL Gameday 2000
989 Sports

It's 4th and goal; you're just inches from the line. The roar of the crowd is deafening and you can hardly see through the blinding snowfall. The ball is snapped, Bubby Brister hands the ball off to Terrell Davis on a delay. Terrell bounces off defenders, jukes left and right, and plows his way into the end zone for the game-winning touchdown. You watch as Terrell and his teammates do the "Mile High Salute" in celebration of another victory. Another day in the NFL? No, just another week in NFL Gameday 2000.

The amazing graphics are the first thing that will catch your eye. All the players are scaled to actual size, weight and body style. So when Gilbert Brown stands next to Warrick Dunn there is no mistaking who is who. The motion-captured animations add some true realism to the game. You will see upended tackles, "shoestring" catches, chop blocks, and sideline "tip toe" catches. There are also over 100 TD dances. With everything from the Falcon's "Dirty Bird" to Green Bay's "Lambeau Leap", you won't believe your eyes.

If you're a fan of the career mode Gameday 2000 contains the best general manager mode available. Not only do you get to cut, add and trade players you also have to manage your salary cap. You can even import graduating seniors from NCAA Gamebreaker 2000, thus adding to its replayabilty.

Enough about the bells and whistles let's talk gameplay. Play selection will definitely not be a problem since there are over 1200 plays to choose from. The AI seems to be improved upon over last year's edition. The receivers seem smarter and wiser. They will find that hole in the defense and not just run a set route. The fullbacks and linemen make unbelievably smart blocks that would make Kevin Gogan proud. However, the passing game is still a little shaky. The quarterback's passing accuracy and percentage are just too high. The computer also has a knack of mishandling time during the 2-minute drill. The computer burns all of its timeouts right after the 2-minute warning, thus creating the problem of not being able to stop the clock at the game's end for a possible winning score. Minus these minor flaws, NFL Gameday 2000 continues be an innovator. Just leave the "Dirty Bird" dancing up to the Atlanta Falcons.

Rating (5-95): 85









...Continued from Page 18

Copter. Do not combine with alcoholic beverages. Prolonged exposure to RC may cause significant improvement to your flying abilities and enjoyment of this title."

"Not recommended for persons with short attention spans, anyone who found the driving tests in Gran Tursimo unbearably annoying (due to the fact the RC Stunt Copter is almost all tests) and anyone who thinks the saying "Getting there is half the fun" is stupid. Keep out of reach of children. May not be suitable for all audiences."

Through extensive research, SM has determined that playing RC Stunt Copter is much more fun than sitting in an inflatable pool while snacking on boiled bologna strips and lime Kool Aid. This title can be a very rewarding experience, but requires hours of learning and training. Only the hardcore need apply. You've been warned.

Rating (5-95): 85



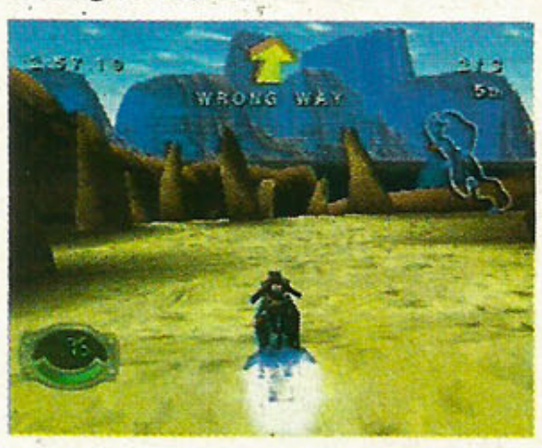
Jet Moto 3
989 Studios

Now here's an example of a game that's going to do very well this holiday season. Unfortunately, it will do so because of advertising and name recognition, not because Jet Moto 3 really adds to the genre. The problems start with the frame rate and get progressively worse from there. The graphics are merely variations on past installments in the series, increasing in quality only slightly if at all.

On the positive side, the tracks are more varied than they used to be and racing on natural terrain (as opposed to neat, man-made tracks) adds excitement to JM3. Unfortunately, the control is a baffling mess that lacks the tightness of an arcade-style racer or the physics of a sim.

Lastly, the title suffers from a rushed, bland feeling that really leaves it in the dust when compared to its competition. Whoever said third time's a charm certainly didn't play Jet Moto 3.

Rating (5-95): 60



NINTENDO 64

Battle Tanx: Global Domination
3D0

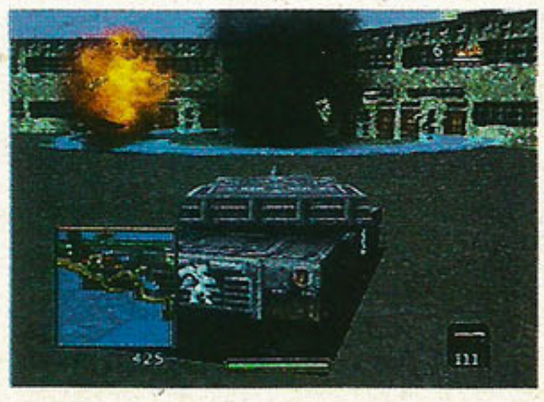
With the exceptions of Earthworm Jim 3-D and Winback, the 64 was looking like it had little to offer over the next few months. Even though it does little that is really new, BT:GD is a pleasant surprise.

In almost every respect, BT:GD is an improvement over last year's Battle Tanx. The graphics are smoother and move more adeptly. The story line still lacks any real ingenuity (in fact it's really stupid) and is almost as twisted as the prequel's, but hey, that's not what this title is about. Battle Tanks is about action, action and action.

Action is exactly what this series has always done best. BT:GD offers the best shooting and blasting on the platform. Everything can be destroyed and every enemy on the screen is trying to put you down. Shoot a building and chances are it'll crumble into a pile of rubble. Just about everything you shoot is accompanied by a satisfyingly large explosion. Of course, the multi-player battles are a riot. SM recommends getting three friends and going at it.

BT:GD is a lot of fun and should please fans of the series and make a bunch of new ones. This is stress relief at its finest.

Rating (5-95): 80



DECRYPTED: CODES AND CHEATS

Legend:
U = Up
D = Down
L = Left
R = Right

Rogue Squadron (N64):
Fly the Naboo Starfighter:
To access the sleek fighter, type in HALIFAX? as your Passcode, select Enter Code, then type in !YNGWIE!. Select Enter Code again, and you'll have full access to the Naboo Starfighter. You'll get the "bad code" sound when you enter it, just ignore the warning.

Fly the TIE Interceptor:
To get your hands on a hijacked TIE Interceptor, enter the password TIEDUP at the password screen. The TIE Interceptor is behind the Millennium Falcon. You must push up on the analog stick to get to it.

Ape Escape (PSX):
Real Ending:
First, beat Specter at Monkey Madness, watch the ending and then go back to the Time Station and save your game. Go back and collect any monkeys you missed. After you collect every Monkey, Peak-Point Matrox will open up. Catch Specter for the last time and you will see the real ending.

Save A Life:
If you fall off a cliff, press START and choose EXIT. When you return to the time station, you will notice you have same amount of lives before you fell of the cliff.

Warzone 2100 (PSX):
Cheat Mode :
YOU MUST ENTER THIS CODE BEFORE YOU CAN USE ANY OF THE OTHERS.
Hold Start on controller two and turn on the PlayStation. Hold start until the main menu appears. Then at the main menu press L1, R1, R2, L1, Select, Start to enable cheat mode. Good Luck!

Additional Structures:
While playing, tap R1 on controller two.

Additional Units:
While playing, tap R2 on controller two.

All Items:
While playing, tap press X on controller two.

God Mode:
While playing, tap Triangle on controller two.
Infinite Power:
While playing, tap Circle on controller two.

Instantly Complete Current Research:
While playing, tap D on controller two.

Level Skip:
While playing, tap Select on controller two.

Super Unit Strength:
While playing, tap U on controller two.

NCAA Football 2000 (PSX):
Cheat mode:
Enter one of the following at the secret codes screen to activate the corresponding cheat function. This game has the capability of accepting custom "patches" through the code screen, giving it a "Virtual GameShark" capability to modify the program on the fly. Thus, codes must be carefully entered, as invalid or incorrect entries may crash the game.

All exhibition mode stadiums:
STADSGALORE

Defense always intercepts:
PIXGALORE

Faster daylight effects:
TIMEFLIES

Receivers always catch the ball:
GIMMEDABALL

View CPU plays:
MINDREADER

Extra long kicks:
ICBM

Knock down referee for 1 point:
BADCALL

View introduction sequence:
BIGSCREEN

View entire rankings:
CONTROVERSEY

Defense always tackles:
BRICKWALL

Maximum recruiting points:
STAFFUP

Super stats team:
UNSTOPPABLE

1947 Army team:
INSIDENOUTSIDE

1957 Oklahoma team:
FORTYSEVENONE

1970 Ohio State team:
BRUTUS

1971 Nebraska team:
GAMEOFCENTURY

1971 Oklahoma team:
SCHOONER

1976 Georgia team:
HEDGES

1981 Clemson team:
TOUCHTHEROCK

1983 Nebraska team:
GOFOR2

1984 Boston College team:
MIRACLE

1986 Penn State team:
LINEBACKERINT

1986 Miami team:
FATIGUES

1987 Miami team:
MONSTERD

1988 West Virginia team:
HURTQB

1994 Oregon team:
GREENGANG

1994 Penn State team:
ALMOSTNO.1

1997 Washington State team:
TURNOVER

1997 Michigan team:
SPLITVOTE

1997 Tennessee team:
SMOKEY

All Tiburon team:
LASERBEAMS

All EA Sports team:
INTHEGAME

Enter one of the following at the secret codes screen to activate the corresponding effect. Invalid or incorrect entries may crash the game.

Heismen pose:
Repeatedly tap X while holding L1 + L2.

Ball spike:

Repeatedly tap ● while holding L1 + L2.

Muscle flexing:
Repeatedly tap ■ while holding L1 + L2.

Back flip:
Repeatedly tap ▲ while holding L1 + L2.

Spin the ball:
Repeatedly tap R1 while holding L1 + L2.

Lunar: Silver Star Story Complete (PSX):
Hidden Game:
Insert the "Making of Lunar" CD-ROM in your Playstation then turn it on. When you see a man drawing a picture, right at the beginning, press: Up, Down, Left, Right, Triangle, and Start. Then you should be at a screen that reads, "Lords of Lunar". Click on the, "Start the Game" button and play. This game is a really freaky pong twist.

WWF Attitude (PSX):
Additional Costumes :
When picking your wrestler, press X for the default outfit, hold L1 and press X for a second outfit , hold L2 and press X for third and hold R2 and press X for one final one.

Bonuses:
To unlock the codes you must finish the Career Mode successfully.

Win the European Championship Belt:
You unlock Sable, Marc Mero, new customs, Trainer and Squeak Mode.

Win the King of the Ring:
You unlock Taka and Kurrgan.

Win the Intercontinental Championship belt:
You unlock Jaqueline, Chyna, Extra Attribute Points, and Big Head Mode.

Win Summer Slam:
You unlock Sgt. Slaughter and Shawn Michaels.

Win the Royal Rumble:
You unlock Jerry "Don't Call Me Larry" Lawler and Paul Bearer.

Win the Heavyweight Championship belt:
You unlock Bleep Mode, Ego Mode and Unlock Head (Al Snow's pal).

Soul Calibur (DC):
Play as Edge Master :
Complete the game with all characters. (including bonus ones)

Transparent characters:
Unlock Edge Master. Then at the selection screen, hold R while choosing a character.

Extra weapons:
Unlock Edge Master and finish all mission battles. At the character selection screen, hold L while selecting a character.

Quake II (N64):
Bonus Level:
To access the bonus level, enter the password "FBBC VBBB FBBC VBF7".

Change Level Colors in Multiplayer:
Enter the password S3TC 00LC 0L0R S??? to change the game's color palette.

God Mode, All Weapons and Stage Skip:
First thing you do is go to the password screen and enter all Qs for the password. It will say that it is an INVALID PASSWORD. Go to options and there should be a DEBUG option where you can turn God Mode on/off.

Infinite Shots in Multi-player:
Enter the code S3T1 NF1N 1T3S H0TS.

Low Gravity in Multi-Player:
Enter the password S3TL 0WGR V1TY ???? to reduce the gravity in multiplayer games.

Mission Mode
To access mission mode, go to the password screen and enter the password FBBC VBBB FBBC VBF7. This will take you to mission 0, where you try to kill the enemies within the stage in a certain amount of time.

Passwords
To access the password screen, choose LOAD GAME then press B when the list of saved games appears.

Level	Password
2	PGBG VF6B M0BH X3CF
3	1KLS DN5H 7NBF DWRQ
4	2KLR SDRY ?VV4 YQ8X
5	VK3T 7LFC 94B7 D3R3
6	WK3H QNBW NLV5 XGL3
7	TK7P 6LLP KWGY XD4V
8	ST0N QPX4 2WGY JXTS
9	R??P 7NY4 2WGX 99TX
10	Q??K BBBV NBQ1 7GCV
11	P64? ZM5B ?BM0 5YH6
12	N664 SQ63 XB?K B7LF
13	M682 M7QT 1215 8098
14	L669 H8MD G8XB JNYV
15	K681 X8CL H01K 1PF5
16	J6?0 BT5M NRZ2 QXLL
17	H6?0 XXFW PHV1 77P4
18	G6?9 GYMK RWNK SMSL
19	F6Y3 WXQK CHD0 8K4D
FINAL	F60? VQCH ?BHF DQQL

Sega Bass Fishing (DC):
Bonus Levels :
Finish the first 2 tournaments in Consumer mode to open up the Palace stage and the last 2 tournaments in Consumer mode to open the Falls level.

Extra Practice Levels:
Beat the game once in arcade mode to unlock three new levels in practice mode.

Tokyo Xtreme Racer (DC):
Get the Honda S2000 :
Defeat the four cars at the end of quest mode to successfully complete the game. You can then purchase this car at the start of your next game.

Get the Porsche 911:
Unlock the Honda S2000 and defeat the other cars in quest mode. You can now purchase the Porsche 911 at the start of the next game.

Sonic Adventure (DC):
Super Sonic :
Beat the game with all six characters to unlock Super Sonic.

Tails :
Use controller two any time after obtaining Tails in the regular game.

GameShark:
Final Fantasy VII (PSX):
Debug Mode:
8009a5c 0041

Note: From the first area you enter you can enter other areas that programmers used to test and debug the game. These areas also allow you to view the movies, change party members, access any area in the game and get a complete set of materia.

Jade Cocoon (PSX):
Infinite Yan:
8008B594 FFFF

All Enemies Have 1 HP:
800B1314 0001
800B139C 0001
800B1424 0001

Croc 2 (PSX):
Infinite Lives:
800765E0 0009
800765E4 0009

Infinite Gems:
80076660 0064

WANTED!:



Beatmania 2nd Mix
Konami
Playstation

Mission:
To fill you in on some great stuff that will almost certainly never see retail release in the US.
Amount of Japanese required to Play:
None. All options and menus are in English. Plus an English manual is included.
Amount of Japanese needed to enjoy fully:
Minimal. A few explanations are in Japanese, but the translations are in English in the Manual.
Reason the U.S. will not see this game:
Music games are looked upon as a Japanese only phenomenon.
Best hope for a state side release:
The recently released arcade version takes off.
Closest U.S. relation(s):
Bust A Groove, Umjammer Lammy

Some games you have to play to appreciate. Beatmania is one of them. When you try to explain the concept of a DJ simulation game, you are usually greeted with blank stares or a polite smile. Save you're smirks and read on.

Do not attempt to play Beatmania with a regular Playstation controller, dual-shock or otherwise. For the full experience, pick up the official Beatmania controller by ASCII or the DJ Man controller. Equipped with a turntable and 5 over-sized buttons, they are only way to really play Beatmania. If money is no object, you can even look into the DJ Station Pro. The Rolls Royce of Beatmania controllers, it actually costs more than the game.

Once you have the proper gear, prepare to delve into Beatmania2nd Mix. The amount of music available is incredible, with over 30 songs ranging from techno to a remix of the Metal Gear Solid theme. If the sheer quantity of tunes doesn't impress you, the quality will. Even after playing hours upon end, you'll never tire of them.

The game itself may remind you of a puzzle game. The icon for the proper note you need to press drops from the top of the screen and you must press the corresponding button as it reaches the red zone. Depending on how good your timing is, you will be graded from "Great!" to "Bad." Exceptional eye/hand coordination is a must. Even if you are a master of music games, you won't be able to race through Beatmania. However, with practice, you will find yourself progressing from level to level and unlocking new songs along the way.

Beatmania is a very addictive game and Japan seems to think so too. Since the release of Beatmania 2nd Mix, a Game boy version and 2 add-on discs for the Playstation have been published. We just hope that Konami doesn't blunder and leave this game in Japan.

NEW

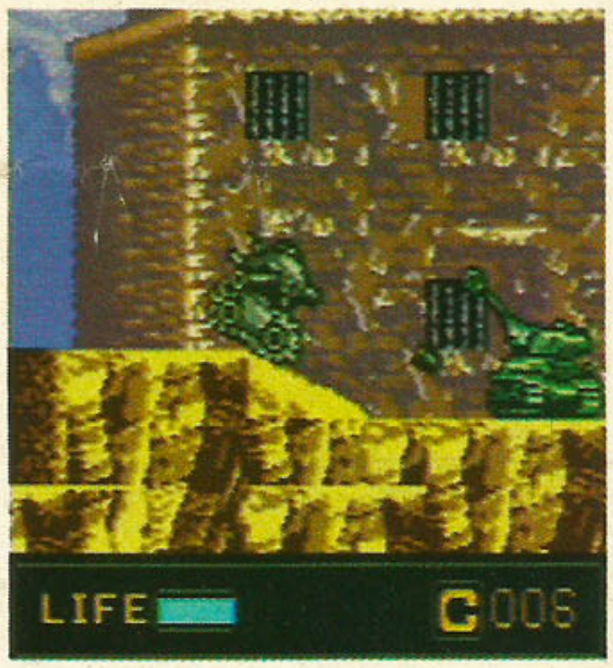
NEO GEO POCKET
BY SNK
PRICE:
69.95
AVAILABLE:
NOW
COLORS:
CLEAR
STONE BLUE
OCEAN BLUE
BLUE
PLATINUM SILVER
ANTHRACITE
BATTERY LIFE:
40 HOURS
THIRD PARTIES:
NAMCO
SEGA
TAITO

The Neo Geo Pocket is now nationally available. As we hopefully made clear last issue, the system is a must buy. The eight titles on the shelves right now include the puzzle games Crush Roller and Bust A Move, the action laden Metal Slug, Pocket Tennis, Baseball Stars, and for fighting fans Samurai Shodown, Fatal Fury First Contact, and King Of Fighters R-2. Sonic and Pac Man are on the way from Sega and Namco respectively. Every one of the launch titles are good games and worth a serious look. It was a tough call, but we managed to pick out the top three games that should go home with you when you buy the system. Did we mention that we like the NGP?

Metal Slug
SNK
For the readers unacquainted with the world of Metal Slug, let's compare the title to something a little more popular: Contra. Not an exact copy by any means, but the classic gameplay and frantic feeling of the Contra series now comes in a bite-sized form on the NGP. Jumping around and shooting soldiers and war vehicles rarely gets this fun these days. Metal Slug's adherence to the traditional rules of platform shooters makes the title an instant classic.

The NGP's graphic capabilities really shine through in Metal Slug, with vivid colors and lots of details in the background and crisp, clear characters in the foreground. This game does a great job of beautifully separating the foreground and background, so that you're never confused about where the action is at.

In a nutshell, this shooter should be on every NGP owner's must-buy list. A fast, nostalgic and addictive shooter that really proves 2-D can still rock.
Rating (5-95): 90



Pocket Tennis
SNK
Even SNK couldn't resist the temptation to develop the obligatory tennis game to go along with their portable console. Welcome to the world of Pocket Tennis, the most entertaining portable tennis game since the days of...well...Game Boy.

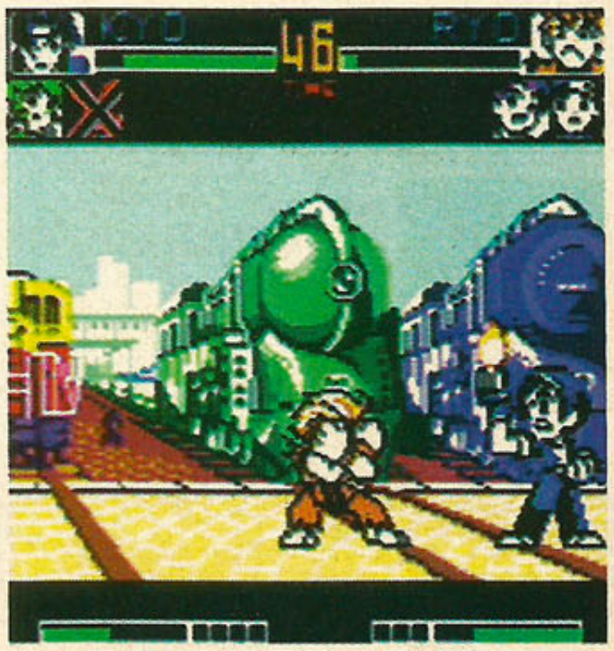
This game's fairly self-explanatory. Choose your player, choose your court, and then have it out with your opponent. If you're reeeeally lucky you'll have an extra friend, Neo Geo Pocket, Pocket Tennis and Link cable for a killer 2-player match. If not, the AI-controlled opponents are fair enough.

While not a groundbreaking title in terms of presentation, the game nevertheless delivered quick, unadulterated tennis fun. After a little practice this game competes with Bust a Move for the game-you-can't-put-down award.
Rating (5-95): 80

King Of Fighters R2
SNK
This is our choice for best game on the system. KOF does everything one would expect from SNK and is a showpiece for the system.

Like the arcade version you can put together teams using characters from SNK's various arcade fighters. Samurai Shodown characters are notably absent, but they have never been in any version of KOF anyway. (It makes sense as that is SNK's other premium series.) We liked the tight control and excellent array of special moves. For the first time ever on a portable we were able to pull off real combos. Playing it is as much fun as a console game.

Graphically, the system has yet to do better. The characters not only have a fairly high res look to them, but they animate smoothly. Factor in the ability to link this title to SNK's Dreamcast title King Of Fighters: Dream Match and you've another very compelling reason to buy this game.
Rating (5-95): 95



THE SUN RISING OVER THE LAND

Juggernaut

Get ready for a roller coaster ride through Hell. **Juggernaut** will take you on a journey through time and space that could prove to be the most frightening and puzzling experience ever on a video game. Demonic possession, murder, and ghostly vendettas are some of the terrors that you will be forced to confront as you make your way through this 3 disc epic of horror. If your nerves and your intellect are good enough, **Juggernaut** will amply reward those who accept the challenge of this trip through dementia.









MATURE M AGES 17+ CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

www.jaleco.com

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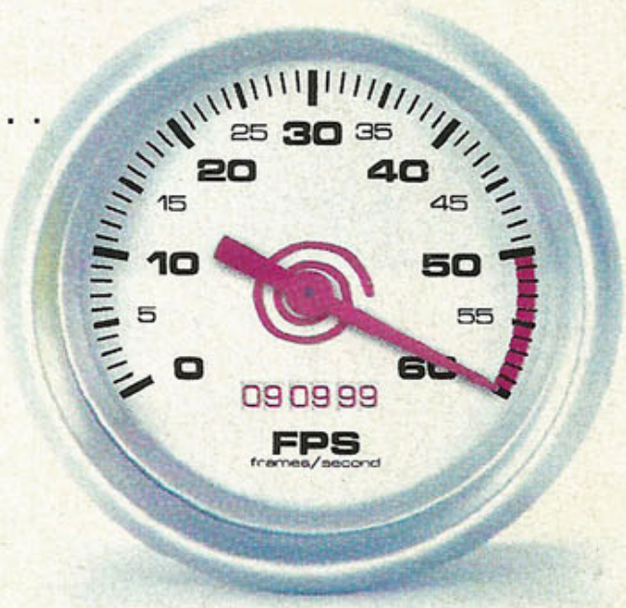
PlayStation®

0-60 IN 1 SECOND.



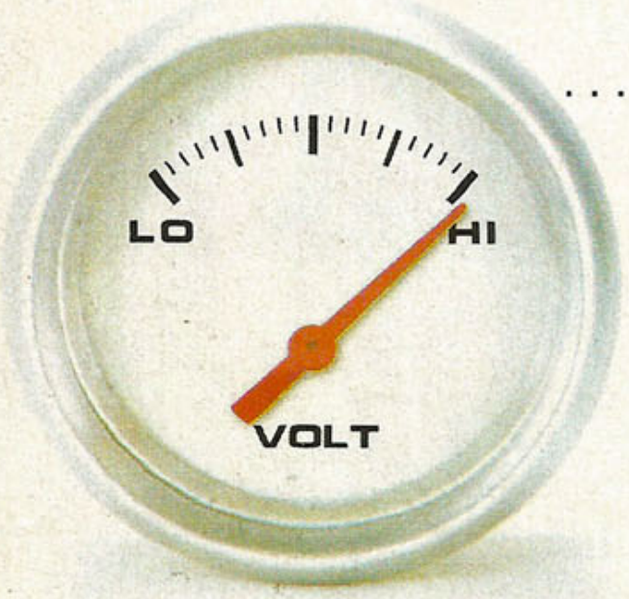
HIGHSPEED

At 60 frames-per-second, TOKYO XTREME RACER is one of the fastest console games in existence. It's a white-knuckle racing experience that will leave you breathless.

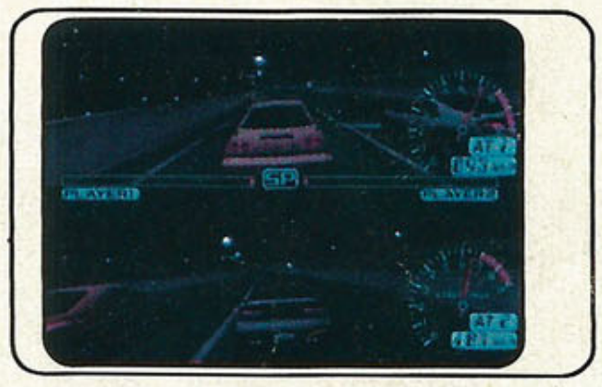


RETRO AVENGERS

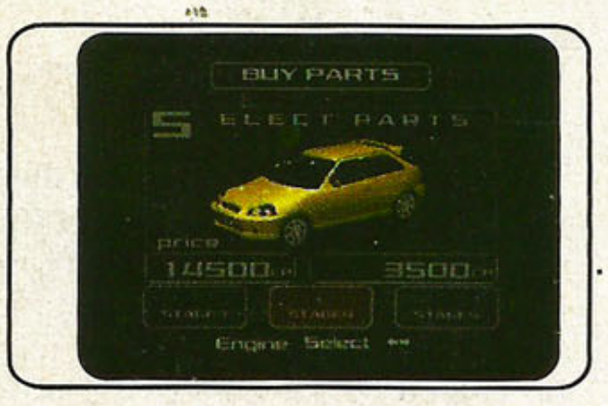
HIGHVOLTAGE



Throw down against road rivals in point battle mode, customize your import racer in quest mode, or choose versus mode to go head-to-head at a blistering 60 frames per second.

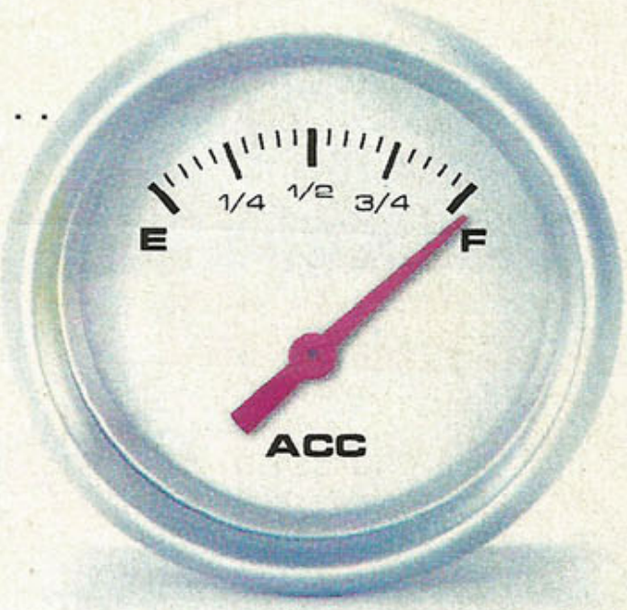


HIGHOCTANE



"This game has unbelievable graphics that, in my opinion, easily rival that of the Gran Turismo 2 demo"
-SEGANET.COM

"Graphically, this game is better than any console racing game to date...period."
-GAMEFAN ONLINE





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Genki

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RETRO AVENGERS



Retroavengers

Preservando a cultura gamer!

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Edição: evil_arthas

Revista: evil_arthas



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